

# SBRACE

## GAZETTE

Vol. 6, No. 5

Nov/Dec 1987

### COMDEX REPORT

By Brian Eliassen

Why is the newsletter so late in arriving? Well, to make a short story long, I called up Bill and said, "Why not delay the newsletter until I return from COMDEX so I can write a column on it?". Since we both were very pressed for time at that moment, he said, "Hey, that's a great idea!". So, now that you know that much of the story, now to the important stuff...the COMDEX report!

Atari did what it does best when necessary in showing up the competition. Atari was the only 1 of the Big 3 home computer companies to be in the main East hall. What's the point hall you ask? It's where all the big boys like to show off. IBM, Motorola, AST, AT&T, Xerox, Wang, Epson, etc. There were lots of Atari personnel and certain names stand out in the crowd. (ie; Sam Tramiel, Garry Tramiel, Sig Hartman, and Neil Harris. Atari did what did last year by inviting certain companies to show their products in the Atari area. Some of the vendors in the Atari area were Hybrid Arts which showed their Hybrid Expander and Harmonic Spectrum Plotter with "Fourier Analysis". What this means is still out in committee! Antic was there showing their new CAD-3D 2.0 Cyber Studio program. It is capable of some real nice 3D animation. Michtron was also there with MasterCAD, an advanced CAD package for the ST. Microsoft Write was running and it seemed to be working okay. You say it should be Word and not Write? Well, Write is Word. In fact, Write is a port-over of Word 1.05 for the Macintosh. This version has been modified to allow it more flexibility than the Macintosh version. A new ST company called Foresight Resources Group! had a real nice CAD program called drafix 1. This program is for the individual who wants PERFECT plottings for serious work.

The ST was not just limited to the Atari booth at COMDEX. They were all over the place but more noticeable at Michtron's booth also in the East hall. They have just released a new version of Airball called Airball Construction Set. In the entire COMDEX area I could not find a single 8-bit product, hardware or software!

### NEW PRODUCTS

Probably the most amazing new product at the Atari booth was the ABAQ machine. What does the ABAQ stand for? If you find out, please let me know! As to what it is, well, it seems to be a parallel processor machine which they call the "Transputer". Fully loaded (with 3 other "transputer" boards) it moves at 130 MIPS with 20 Megaflops! Atari says it has 4 graphics modes: Mode 0 is 1280x960 with 16 colors out of 4096 (yes, those are the numbers and not a misprint!). Mode 1 has 1024x768 with 256 colors out of 16 million. Mode 2 has two screens, each at 640x480 with 265 colors out of 16 million. Mode 3 is 512x480 with 16 million colors out of 16 million! It should be available in the second quarter of 1988 but then again, this is Atari and it could be 1989 or 1990! Its price is currently at \$5000 with monitor and it currently needs a Mega or ST as its front end I/O machine. They are planning on having it as a stand alone unit for only \$3000 soon but without a monitor. Monitors for this resolution can cost up to \$1000 or more. In essence, it will be 12 computers working on the same program at the same time, working very fast. It runs the Perhelion operating system which is basically UNIX V and I am told it has a "C" compiler all ready to run.

Atari finally had a CD-ROM player there which has been dubbed the CDAR500 which uses the standard 12cm disc. It can have 540 Megs of read only data and Atari has allowed it to play audio. In effect, making it a CD player. It works on the Mega and STs through the DMA port and will retail at \$599.

Atari also had their Laser Printer running at the show. It is called the SLM804 and looked very impressive. It uses software fonts and also uses the DMA port on the ST. There was no price available on this.

As we all know, Atari is going ahead with the Atari PC. They had 4 models dubbed PC1, PC2, PC3, and PC4 but they dropped the PC3 model already. The PC1 is an unexpandable XT with EGA capability. The PC2 is a PC1 but with 5 slot for expandability. The PC4 is an AT compatible with EGA and VGA graphics and has 5 expansion slots. Prices are said to be very low but were unavailable.

Atari has allowed connectivity between the Mega, ST, and



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PC systems by using NETBIOS used by IBM and Novell. There was no additional information available but it seems to be Atari's answer to a LAN.

Atari also has a program called Deskset which needs a Mega4 and SLM804 Laser Printer to work. It is a desktop typography system which is a very full featured desktop publisher.

Atari is also releasing 2 hard disk systems. A 20 and 40 Meg drive called the MEGA FILE 20 and MEGA FILE 40 respectively. These fit perfectly under the Mega computers and have an extra DMA port on them for daisy chaining.

Overall, it was a good show for Atari. Being in the big hall got them plenty of exposure and hopefully, with the introduction of the ABAQ system, they will be taken seriously in the business world.

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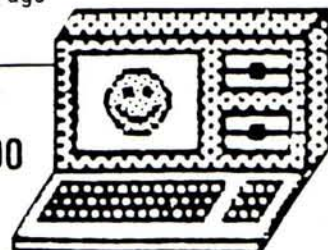
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## Bureaucracy

By Greg Knauss

Infocom, Inc., the de facto leader in interactive fiction text adventures, has just released a new game, called *Bureaucracy*, by the author of the best-selling *"Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy,"* Douglas Adams.

Reportedly inspired by Adams own adventures trying to get from his home in London to a job in Paris, *Bureaucracy* and your adventure begin the same way. Unfortunately, (You could have guessed that was coming) your credit cards have been mistakenly canceled, your new bank has not received your change-of-address card yet, all the mail has been delivered to the wrong houses, and you live in an impossibly strange neighborhood. Obviously, the game's namesake is out in force, doing everything in it's formidable power to make your life difficult. This is *Bureaucracy's* success as well as its downfall.

Though the game is very, very funny, some of its situations are mind-numbingly frustrating - they emulate a bureaucracy far too well. For instance, in a fast food restaurant you place an order (Oh! It sounds so simple put like that) only to have the stores computer crash and loose what you had entered. You must place it again. Another situation, at the beginning of the game, requires you to enter information about yourself... Every time you boot up, again and again and again. Though these problems can be taken care of by making a save of the game after you have passed them, it's still a bit annoying, and these are only two examples.

The game itself is "looser" than other Infocoms. The author took quite a bit of liberty with the descriptions and situations of the game. At one point, you are standing on a porch. *Bureaucracy* describes it like this: "Welcome to the porch. It is a porch. There is a screen door to the east and another door south. The over-all effect is very porchy." Quite funny, but not quite the type of information that you need to actually DO something on the porch. What color is it? Is it old? New? Dirty? Any loose bricks around? There's a level of descriptiveness missing in *Bureaucracy* that is in all of Infocom's other games.

Where the game is good, though, it's great. The writing of *Bureaucracy* is excellent; this is Adams' strong suit. He is a professional humor writer and at some points in the game you will have to stop playing and wait a few minutes before you settle down enough to move on.

Overall, *Bureaucracy* is a good game. Not great, but good. Perhaps more of a "complete the set" work for Adams or Infocom fans than a hit. If you like either, you will probably enjoy *Bureaucracy*, but not as much as you will *Hitchhiker's*. If you put *"Hitchhiker's"* down half way through, or never finished *Zork*, than this game isn't for you.

Monthly meetings of S.B.A.C.E. the Final Frontier for Atari users, are held on the second Tuesday of each month, at 7:30 PM. The meeting location is:

VFW Hall  
1865 Lomita Blvd  
Lomita, CA 90717

Monthly ST meetings are held on the last Monday of the month, at 8:00 PM. The meeting location is:

Lawndale Community Center  
15331 Prairie Ave.  
Lawndale CA.

### SBACE OFFICERS:

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All telephone numbers above are in the 213 area code.



SAM MISTAKENLY ASSUMED THAT HIS  
VIDEO GAME SKILLS HAD SOME  
PRACTICAL APPLICATION...



Let's sing a song of not enough  
To keep track of life's score  
I guess life's getting rougher  
To need 16 bits-or more.

## Fred and Me A 48K Friendship (part 3)

by D.B.

It was Sunday morning and I walked into Fred's room to say hello to the old 800. I had forgotten and left Fred on all night. He looked a little bleary eyed.

D.B.: What's the problem Fred?

Fred: Are you kidding! Do you know how many loops I've done since yesterday. Even I can't count that high, at least I don't think so. Maybe I'll keep track sometime and see. If you're going to do that again I wish you would turn off Antic. It's a lot easier you know, if I don't have to keep track of the screen. Kind of a waste too. I never found a thing there but that READY thing. Who's idea was that anyway. There are times when I'm not ready, you know. Every one wants a little time to themselves now and then.

D.B.: Gee, Fred, I thought you were always READY for me.

Fred: Oh, oh, I feel something in the air. I hope it's not assembly language. You always mess me up so when you try that.

D.B.: No it's something in BASIC with some machine language routines thrown in for the hard part.

Fred: Machine language routines, where did you steal them from? Have you been talking to Dan Prince or Mike Andruschak again? I think you've ripped off everything they have ever written with the assembler.

D.B.: Come on, Fred, I didn't rip them off. Those guys are just nice enough to share, that's all. You know, like you and I share.

Fred: Sure you spend a few days on a program and then I'm stuck with it from then on. You call that sharing? Anyway, what is it going to be?

D.B.: Well I have signed up for cable TV and they have all these movies without any commercials.

Fred: What's a commercial?

D.B.: That's when someone tries to sell you something that you don't want or really need.

Fred: Oh, I'm familiar with that, you are always doing that to me. Typing in stuff that I don't want or need. Are those commercials?

D.B.: No those are program statements. Everyone needs to make a statement now and then Fred, didn't you know that?

Fred: Let's get on with the TV thing. What do I have to do?

D.B.: Well, Fred, there are going to be a lot of movies to keep track of, in fact, a few hundred. Think you can handle it?

Fred: How long is each record going to be?

D.B.: Well, I figure about 35 bytes long. Have to have room for the movie name and for a rating on each one.

Fred: Well that isn't any problem. I can handle 35 bytes and not even look up.

D.B.: Uh, Fred, there are going to be a lot of records to keep track of, I mean a lot.

Fred: Are you crazy how are you going to watch hundreds of movies when you spend all your spare time with me?

D.B.: That's beside the point, Fred, are you up to the task?

Fred: How many?

D.B.: I hate to tell you this Fred, but there are a few hundred of them already.

Fred: Already! Are you crazy? You must have a chip loose somewhere!

D.B.: I know, Fred, that's a lot, but you know how we humans are with hobbies.

Fred: I should. I thought my keys would never stop aching for the first year you had me. Poke, poke, poke, all day and half the night.

D.B.: I was a little forward, I guess, but what about the movie program? Can you handle it?



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Fred: I can spare you 20,000 bytes. How's that for calculating?

D.B.: I don't know, Fred, I was figuring on at least 800 movies. That means I need 24,500 just to be able to sort them in order. What about it?

Fred: Sure, I'll turn loose of that many if you want. Can you write a one line program to do all this?

D.B.: Very funny, Fred!

Fred: Well then, sighed Fred, you're talking to the wrong boy.

D.B.: Listen, Fred, do you remember your sister, sweet Ilene, the XE?

Fred: Oh, you mean that cute thing in the other room. Sure I remember her. Could I tell you some stories of her midnight antics. Wow!

J.B. (Ignoring the snide remarks): You know Ilene has this extended memory, an extra 64K that can be used as a RAMdisk.

Fred: You mean like Dolly Parton?

D.B.: No, Fred, not mammary, I said expanded memory!

Fred: Oh, I guess I don't know what a RAMdisk is but it sounds like it would hurt.

D.B.: No, it doesn't hurt, Fred, it's just a disk drive in memory.

Fred: You're not serious. You mean she doesn't have to have all those wires going into her and listen to that infernal beeping all the time?

D.B.: Well, Fred, things do get better, you know.

Fred: Oh, I'm not too sure of that. You still can't do assembly language and look how long it's been.

D.B.: Well, Fred, here's my plan. I thought if you would go along with me I would write separate program modules to do the different tasks required and just store them in Ilene's RAMdisk.

Fred: Does your wife know about this?

D.B.: Come on Fred, stop being cute. I want to write all the modules on you and then have Ilene handle them.

Fred: Good grief, I have to do all the work and Ilene gets to watch all those movies. What a world! Why couldn't I have been a main frame? Hey Ilene, I'm warning you, keep the volume down, and no bad language or nudity. And don't forget I like old classics. You know, Humphrey Bogart, Clark Gable and all those great ones. Shine up my screen-Lets go to the movies.

(To be continued...)

## MAGAZINE LIBRARY

Analog -- # 7 to 53  
 Antic -- June '82 to June '87 \*  
 Atari Explorer (Connection) -- Summer '83 to Apr/May '85  
 Byte -- Feb. '82 to Aug '87  
 Compute -- July '81, and Sep. '82, to July. '85 \*  
 Computer Fun -- Apr. and May '84  
 Computer Gaming World -- Vol 2 #4 to Vol 3 #5 \*  
 Computers & Electronics -- May '83 to Feb. '85 \*  
 Creative Computing -- Jun. '82 to July '84 \*  
 Family Computing -- Feb. and Mar. '84  
 Hi-Res Magazine -- Jan., Mar. and May/June '84  
 InfoWorld -- Volume 5, # 27 to Volume 7, # 8 \*  
 Interface Age -- Dec. '82  
 Page 6 -- Issue 21 to 28 \*  
 Personal Computing -- Oct. '82 to June '84 \*  
 Popular Computing -- Dec. '81 to Oct. '84  
 Softside -- Oct. '81 to Mar. '84 \*  
 ST Applications Mar '87 to July '87  
 ST Business Sept/Oct '86  
 ST Log (Analog) issue 10 to 12  
 ST World volume II NO. 3 & 4  
 Today the Videotext Computer Magazine -- 6/83 to 8/84

\* Some issues are missing.

If you want to borrow one of these magazines, call me, or send me a post card and I will bring that issue to the next SBACE meeting. I am going to try to bring some of the more recent issues to each meeting from now on.

Daniel Prince  
 5200 Marathon #207  
 Los Angeles Ca. 90038



## Plu-Perfect (Letter Perfect and XED)

by Rick "I'm also Perfect" Reaser Jr  
October 1987

I am currently a graduate student at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA. In one of my courses called "Man-Machine Interfaces," the class was asked to compare full screen and line oriented text editors. The three paragraph comparison was to be "written" with the Defense Data Network (DDN) line editor used by the Naval Postgraduate School's DDN host computer in Marina del Rey. Since I have an Atari computer and a modem, I am able to call up the host through a local Terminal Access Controller (TAC) and do my assignments at home without paying a toll charge. The following paragraphs are the resulting comparison between a line oriented and full screen editor.

The full screen editor that I am most familiar with is the one in Letter Perfect. Letter Perfect is a word processing program for the Atari 800 home computer. The Letter Perfect editor uses all the capabilities of the Atari 800 full screen editing architecture. The main feature of the Letter Perfect full screen editor is that once you are in a file, you can move to any character or place in the file using the cursor control (arrow) keys. You can also advance (or regress) through a file word by word, line by line, paragraph by paragraph, or page by page with a minimum of keystrokes. These capabilities make editing very fast since you can find things quickly in a file. Letter Perfect supports all the other standard text editing features like search and replace, block of text moves, copies, deletions, and so forth. The other really great feature in Letter Perfect is that you can quickly toggle between "insert" mode and "type over" mode. In many editors this is a difficult task.

XED is a line oriented text editor used on the TOPS-20 operating system for DEC mainframe computers. To edit a portion of text, you must specify which line or lines you want to edit as compared to moving the cursor with the "arrow" keys. XED supports basically the same word processing functions (text block copy, delete, and move) but does them in a slightly different fashion. Unlike Letter Perfect, there are three modes in XED. The "text entry mode" is used to type in the bulk of the text. The "command mode" is used to move through the text document. With Letter Perfect, you are basically always in the "text entry mode" since the document you are editing always remains on the screen and accessible with the cursor control keys. The third mode in XED called the "change mode" and like the "text entry mode", it is

entered through the "command mode." Once you've entered your text using the "text entry mode," you move through the text using the "command mode" and edit it using the "change mode." There are several word processing features available directly in the "command mode" such as search and replace. XED is essentially a full featured word processor.

Letter Perfect and XED basically have the same features and can do the same things. It is much more natural, however, to move through a document with a full screen editor than with a line editor. When a person reviews and edits a typed page by hand, he scans the entire document with his eyes, much the same way you can with the cursor control keys in Letter Perfect. It is not natural to think of what line number an item is on and then have your eyes move to that line. There are many more keyboard commands and modes to remember in XED than with Letter Perfect. The "change mode" has many commands, while in Letter Perfect you basically type over something or insert something after you move to the location with the cursor control keys. XED does have two features that are outstanding however. First is the text buffer. Once you delete anything with Letter Perfect, it is gone forever. Not so with XED. You can recall deletions (to a point) from the textbuffer. If you delete something by mistake, you can recover. Other word processors for the Atari 800 (like the popular Atariwriter) have this feature, but not Letter Perfect. The main strong point of XED is that it can be used on just about any computer. I'm using it on my Atari 800 to do this article. I don't think there will ever come a time when Letter Perfect will be running on the DEC. Not all computers support the complexities of full screen editing or use the same cursor control protocols. So XED is a wordprocessing system that anybody can access, even a "dumb" teletype terminal. Other than that, XED can be very cumbersome, since there are so many keyboard commands to remember. I didn't read the manual for Letter Perfect until long after I was already using the program. It was a different story with XED.

Full screen and line editors each have their place in computer networks. If industry could get together, however, and define a universal full screen editing architecture, all of us except the teletype terminals could eventually do our text editing in a more natural fashion.

Any computer network that wants to be able to support multiple types of terminals is basically going to be forced to use a line editor. There are a lot of teletype terminals out there still that cannot support cursor control commands. There are also several different full screen protocols out there that do not interoperate well.



I would like to take this opportunity to welcome a new addition to the SBACE officers. Bob Lunker will be taking over as 8-bit Librarian. This comes after Mike Andruschak resigned from this position due to a lack of free time. Being newly married and having a baby born can severely cut into your free time as some of you may know. We wish Bob luck in this enormous task ahead of him. I have heard that the library is 6 months behind!

#### MEETING MINUTES

by Orrin Walker

The August meeting of South Bay Atari Computer Enthusiasts was held on Tuesday the 11th of August 1987 at the V.F.W. hall on Lomita Blvd in the city of Lomita. There were approximately 30 members and guests in attendance.

A Swap Meet session started off the evening and ran from about 7:00 P.M. until the beginning of the business meeting. This will be a regular event as approved by the membership at the June meeting. It will provide a means to re-cycle the ATARI equipment to interested parties. Additional time for barter will also be available after the regular meeting. **BRING YOUR GOODIES!!**

The meeting was called to order by President Eugene Bienko at 7:30 P.M. and the officers reported as follows:

Librarian Mike Andruschak was not at the meeting to report on the 8-bit Library, however Gene Bienko indicated that there was no cable for the monitor at Software Center, so a replacement will be purchased.

Recording Secretary Orrin Walker turned over the July report on disk to Gazette Editor Bill Little.

ST Vice President Alan Haskell reported 41 Public Domain Disks in the Library for the enjoyment of the ST Users, no change from the July report.

Treasurer's report was postponed until September but approximately \$1200.00 remains in the checking account and the disbursements about equal the income.

The Rumors and Random Access portions of the meeting provided considerable interest and help. Item: Double Disk Drive from Atari; Item: CD-ROM from Apple; Item: 3-4 Meg STs with different GEM.

Robert Rendall demonstrated a new version of Monopoly in 8-bit and he was followed by Greg Knauss with Upward, Cloudhopper, Trial by Fire, Reardoor, Frog and Juxtaposition- All very impressive! Gene Bienko demonstrated Phonelist written by Dale Bryant and Jean Rowe. He also showed the start of Voicemaster.

Orrin Walker demonstrated a sampling of 1st Word and the way it is used to record the minutes of these meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Most members had disbanded by 9:55 P.M.

The September meeting of South Bay Atari Computer Enthusiasts was held on Tuesday the 14th of September 1987 at the VFW hall on Lomita Blvd in the city of Lomita. There were approximately 36 members and guests in attendance.

A Swap Meet session started off the evening and ran from about 7:00 P.M. until the beginning of the business meeting. This will be a regular event as approved by the membership at the June meeting. It will provide a means to re-cycle the ATARI equipment to interested parties. Additional time for barter will also be available after the regular meeting. **BRING YOUR GOODIES!!**

The meeting was called to order by President Eugene Bienko at 7:30 P.M. and the officers reported as follows:

Librarian Mike Andruschak was not at the meeting to report on the 8-bit Library, however Gene Bienko indicated that there were two working drives at Software Center, and all equipment appeared to be working satisfactorily.

Recording Secretary Orrin Walker turned over the August report on disk to Gazette Editor Bill Little.

ST Vice President Alan Haskell reported 45 Public Domain Disks in the Library for the enjoyment of the ST Users.

Disk Reasor reported receipt of a letter from Poland seeking pen-pals and software. Also mentioned were the FREEBIES from Microtimes.

Brian Eliassen has offered to help out as Assistant Gazette Editor and his efforts will be appreciated.

Treasurer's report was postponed until October but approximately \$1200.00 remains in the checking account and the disbursements about equal the income.

The Rumors and Random Access portions of the meeting provided considerable interest and help. Item: Word Perfect for the ST should be available at ATARI FAIRE about 500 copies; Item: Harry Koons announced that FAX ADVANTAGE "Early Bird" issue now on sale at \$59.95 with update for \$15.95 ready in December (User Group discounted to \$35.95).

8-Bit Demos for the evening: Brian Eliassen had three Graphics demos. Gene Bienko showed a Directory Lister.

16-Bit Demos included Chessmaster from Gene Bienko; Fonts and Borders by Alan Haskell, Start Scientific Calculator by Jerry Bransford, a Slide Show by Alan Haskell and an impressive hardware demo of the 5 1/4 IBM/ST Disk drive by Darren Harmon. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Most members had disbanded by 9:55 P.M.

Minutes of the SBACE ST SIG for August 1987:

Alan Haskell opened the meeting at 8:00 P.M. at the regular meeting hall on Prairie Avenue. Seventeen members and guests were in attendance.

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Many questions were answered during the RAM session and it was reported that 45 disks are now in the Public Domain Library available to all members.

An additional announcement was made regarding the ATARI FAIRE to be held in Glendale the 19th and 20th of September. It will be at the same site as last year's event which took place at 1401 North Verdugo Road.

A demonstration of Ray Roux's Picture Utility was given by Alan Haskell and then followed by a demonstration of ARAKIS Geometry program and a 3D Graphing program from START magazine. Jim Brown showed his Random Lines demonstration where the speed of DBASIC was compared to Compiled "C"---rather impressive!

The meeting officially adjourned at 9:20 P.M., however many stayed to copy programs from the PD library and exchange other information.

## Minutes of the SBACE ST SIG for September 1987:

Alan Haskell opened the meeting at 8:00 P.M. at the regular meeting hall on Prairie Avenue. Twenty-three members and guests were in attendance.

Many questions were answered during the RAM session and it was reported that 56 disks are now in the Public Domain Library available to all members.

An additional announcement was made regarding the ATARI FAIRE that was held in Glendale the 19th and 20th of September. 51 retailers exhibited their wares at 1401 North Verdugo Road. The Mega STs are now available in Europe and soon to be available in the US, but not by Mail-Order. (Newer info: Mid Cities already has them in Stock).

A demonstration of Stoneage was presented by Eric Parkhill which was followed by Alan Haskell's showing of ST Express Music Cartoon, Financial Cookbook, ST Tour (a ST Tutorial for Gem) and a showing of Move-It Animations on the View-It Disk. Dan Ugrin had set up his Keyboard and Synthesizer Box and dazzled us all with the capabilities of these systems. Pre-recorded music was played and then we were treated to a few melodies by Jerry Bransford. The range of sounds was positively impressive!

The meeting officially adjourned at 9:30 P.M., however many stayed to copy programs from the PD library and exchange other information.

\*\*\*\*\*PLEASE BRING DEMOS TO THE MEETINGS-SHARE\*\*\*\*\*

eight

# EMCOM

(213) 320-4757

## SALE SALE SALE

ATTITYPE	Mouse Pads (9"x12") Blue or Grey .....	\$ 6.99
VERBATIM	3.5" diskettes (10 SSDD) .....	\$ 15.99
VERBATIM	3.5" diskettes (10 DSDD) .....	\$ 19.99
BONUS	3.5" diskettes (10 DSDD) .....	\$ 18.99
MAXELL	5.25" diskettes (10 SSDD) .....	\$ 11.99
MAXELL	5.25" diskettes (10 DSDD) .....	\$ 12.99
VERBATIM	5.25" diskettes (10 DSDD) .....	\$ 11.99
PENGO	3.5" 50 diskette file w/lock .....	\$ 12.99
PENGO	5.25" 100 diskette file w/lock .....	\$ 12.99
SURGE ALERT	suppressor EMI/RFI w/ins clamp time ....	\$ 15.99
RIBBONS	.....	CALL
PAPER	.....	CALL

HENRY THOUGHT: "WELL, IT'S  
NEVER DONE THAT BEFORE "





## Routines you can use:

by Jean Rowe and Dale Bryant

## Same old message at boot time?

Here is a short source code program that can be assembled as an AUTORUN.SYS file that will change that READY message to one of your own choosing. I hope that some of the members in the club that are more proficient in assembly language will share their favorite routines with the rest of us. Either stand alone code or routines that can be interfaced with BASIC will be welcome.

```

10 ;LIST@:SBACE
20 ;
30 ; ASM,,@:AUTORUN.SYS
40 ;
50 .OPT OBJ,NO LIST
60 ;
0100 ;-----
0110 ; OS Equates
0120 ;-----
0130 RUNAD = $02E0
      ICCOM = $0342
0140 ICSTA = $0343
0160 ICBAL = $0344
0170 ICBALH = $0345
0180 ICBLL = $0348
0190 ICBLLH = $0349
0200 ICAX1 = $034A
0210 ICAX2 = $034B
0220 CIOV = $E456
0230 ;-----
0240 ; CIO Equates
0250 ;-----
0260 OPEN = 3
0270 GETREC = 5
0280 GETBUF = 7
0290 PUTREC = 9
0300 PUTBUF = 11
0310 CLOSE = 12
0320 ;
0330 READ = 4
0340 WRITE = 8
0380 CONS = $D01F
0390 ;
0400 ;
0410 ; Program start
0420 ;
      *= $4000

```

```

0440 ;
0450 ;
0460 INIT
0470 LDY # <WELCOME ; Get message
0480 LDA # >WELCOME ; and then
0490 JSR PRINT ; print it.
0500 BMI ERROR ; If error
0510 JMP CON ; no error
0520 ;
0530 ;
0540 PRINT
0550 LDX #00 ; use editor
0560 STA ICBALH,X ; msg. hi
0570 TYA ; and low adr.
0580 STA ICBAL,X
0590 LDA #FF ; buffer length
0600 STA ICBLL,X ; could be
0610 STA ICBLLH,X ; much smaller
0620 LDA #09 ; putrec command
0630 STA ICCOM,X ; goes here
0640 JSR CIOV ; tell CIOV
0650 RTS ; ret. from sub.
0660 ERROR LDY # <ERMSG ; if error
0670 LDA # >ERMSG ; get message
0680 JSR PRINT ; and print
0690 CON LDA CONS ; Then wait for
0700 CMP #6 ; START key
0710 BNE CON ; press
0720 RTS ; DOS
0730 WELCOME .BYTE 125,127," Glad to see you, Drin
      " ; Clear screen & tab once
0740 .BYTE 29," Please PRESS START",$9B ; print 1 down
0750 ERMSG .BYTE "Error has Occurred!!!",$9B
0760 *= RUNAD ; make it an
0770 .WORD INIT ; AUTORUN.SYS
0780 .END

```

Just change the message in line 730 to whatever you would like to see on your monitor at boot up. You can add a longer message if you like. Just remember to terminate your message with an EOL (\$9B or decimal 155) character. The built in routine at \$E456 (CIOV) takes care of most of the work. We are using channel zero so we don't have to worry about the open and close routines for the IOCB. I hope you experimented with the display list example and have created a few of your own. We will try to give an example of disk I/O in the future if the code can be kept short enough for the newsletter.



### Routines You Can Use

by Jean Rowe and Dale Bryant

Let me say at the start that someone else should be doing this series of articles on assembly language. As I have just recently started to learn assembly language I feel very unqualified in trying to teach it to others. I know there are other members in SBACE who should be doing this series but somehow they never get around to it. How sad for the rest of us who have a constant desire to learn more about the Atari family of computers. Another thing that saddens me is that those who have switched to the ST line seem to be users only and not programmers. This one fact has probably discouraged me more from buying an ST than any other. Where is the Bill Wilkenson of the 16 bit Atari?

Rest assured that the assembly language routines in this series will not cause Mr. Wilkenson to switch his allegiance to the ST. If I get in too deep I will just pester Mark Price for the answer. Mark has been a great help to me in this new endeavor and I owe him many thanks.

Let's get on to the purpose of this article and write a little source code. If some of you see how these routines could be made better please come forward and explain. I'm not nearly as interested in my ego as I am in acquiring knowledge about assembly language. O.K., let's do a display list in assembly.

```
0100 ;
0110 .OPT OBJ,NO LIST
0120 SDLSTL = $0230 ; display list start address
0130 COLOR0 = $02C4 ; start of color registers
0140 CON = $D01F ; console keys:OPTION-SELECT-START
0150 ;
0160 *= $6000
0170 ;
0180 ;
0190 LDA # <DLIST ; Find address
0200 STA SDLSTL ; low and
0210 LDA # >DLIST ; high and tell
0220 STA SDLSTL+1 ; Antic
0230 LDX #4 ; Use the X-reg
0240 NEATO LDA COLOR,X ; to load
0250 STA COLOR0,X ; some color
0260 DEX ; till X
0270 BNE NEATO ; = zero
0280 CONS LDA CON ; Check console
0290 CMP #6 ; for START key
0300 BNE CONS ; no-then wait
0310 BRK ; if START-stop
0320 ;
```

```
0330 ;
0340 ;
0350 ;
0360 DLIST
0370 .BYTE $70,$70,$70 ; 24 blank lines
0380 .BYTE $42 ; LMS plus Antic mode
0390 .WORD DLTX ; for our text
0400 .BYTE $70,$70,$06,$70 ; more blank lines, one GR. 1
                                line
0410 .BYTE $70,$70,$70 ; blank lines
0420 .BYTE $00,$02,$00 ; blanks and
0430 .BYTE $70,$70,$70 ; four Gr.0 lines
0440 .BYTE $02,$70,$70 ; finish the
0450 .BYTE $02,$70,$02 ; list
0460 .BYTE $41 ; JUMP back
0470 .WORD DLIST ; to top
0480 ;
0490 ;
0500 ; here is the text to display
0510 ;
0520 DLTX
0530 .SBYTE " Display List in Assembly Language "
0540 .SBYTE " sbace "
0550 .SBYTE "Supporting the Novice & the Professional"
0560 .SBYTE " We Teach:We Learn:We Share "
0570 .SBYTE " Atari 800-800XL-130XE:520ST-1040ST "
0580 .SBYTE " Press START "
0590 ; change some colors-play with these
0600 COLOR .BYTE $00,$FF,$03,$CF,$00
0610 .END
```

Simple enough, right? However, it's an easy way to dress up your programs. Many variations can be used when creating display lists. Blank lines, mixed modes, interrupts, etc. Go on now, experiment and have fun. You might be surprised how enlightening experimentation can be.





## I WAS A TEEN-AGE SYSOP

By D. Who

During the summer of 1987, strange and horrible experiments took place at my house. Awful things. Terrible things. Things to fray nerves, to make skin crawl, and to keep one awake at night.

I became a... sysop!

A system operator (or sysop) is a person who runs, at great personal expense and very little personal gain, a bulletin board system (BBS) from his house. A BBS is something designed to take all your computer equipment away from you - you set your computer up with a program to accept outside calls over your modem.

The system I ran (or rather, staggered) was the SWAMPS (South Western Atari Message and Program Service, 213-324-0218) taken over from a friend of mine while he and his wife had a baby. I remember setting the beast up, excited and even looking forward to the weeks ahead. I was going to be a sysop! I could validate users and do the housekeeping and... Uh... And... Er...

Aw, who cares? I have a BBS! Wow! That first day, I'll giddy with the thrill of it all, I sat in front of the screen, waiting for someone to call. I waited and waited and waited. Then I waited some more. I did a bit more waiting until finally I decided to wait. After that, I yawned, then did some more waiting.

Boy, was this fun!

Eventually, people did start to call. Usually, in the middle of the night. I knew they called in the middle of the night because when they connected the modem gave a high pitched beep! Then my drives ran for about half an hour... Grind, grind, whirr.

Maybe this wasn't going to be as fun as I had thought...

The joy of losing my computer to the BBS quickly became the indifference of my losing sleep to a noisy modem which quickly became the horror of watching my drives catch fire from the heat of being on 24 hours a day. Mike, my friend, called up and said, "You might want to keep a cooling fan on them. Those older drives weren't designed to run that long."

Whisper.

After an afternoon of pure panic, I got the drives back up and the BBS was running again. Soon after the complaints started coming in. People asking Mike to take back the BBS so that it could be in competent hands again. I paid 80 bucks to have a line installed for this?

Apparently, I was determined to improve though. Mike - not saying that this was an acid-test for the BBS, if I could handle it, anybody could...

Finally, after spending about two hours a day on the silly thing for a week, the situation started to improve. The message bases were running smoothly, the number of callers was picking up, people seemed satisfied.

This, of course, is just about the time the data disk chose to get a bad sector.

For a BBS data disk to get a bad sector is the approximate equivalent of a brick wall suddenly appearing in front of a speeding car. Things rapidly went higgly-piggly.

As I was attempting to straighten out the bad sector mess, I accidentally erased the message allocation map, the thing that tells the computer where each message is. This is the equivalent of dropping seven tons of cement blocks on top of the car that hit the wall.

As I recall, I screamed a lot.

The BBS was now a complete mess. I've seen explosions with more organization.

And so I took the chickens way out: I reinitialized the BBS. I took everything and started over. This had only been done three times before in the history of the SWAMPS, in the three years of its existence. I did it after three weeks.

And then I did it again, after I messed up again.

And then I did it again again.

Three times. That's got to be some sort of record...

Finally, six weeks after I took the monster over, Mike wanted it back. The price of call-forwarding all the calls from his number to mine was higher than he had expected.

I didn't object...

When I first took the SWAMPS, I had vision of my own BBS dancing in my head when I gave Mike his board back. I would set it up and run it and everything! It would be MY BBS. Though I did enjoy running the SWAMPS (believe it or not), I realized now how much work goes into it. I had always respected sysops before, but I had never realized how much they go through every day keeping those beasts up and running so myself and other users could call - for free, at that!

When you call BBSs, be kind to the sysops, respect their rules and give them support. The life of a system operator is not easy.

And I, personally, would rather have my nose cut off than run my own BBS....

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## What's GNU

by  
Dick Reaser

(October 1987)



AI Keys to Los Angeles, Donald Forbes (JACS-August 87).  
Example of Search Strategies used in Artificial Intelligence.

Change Defaults in Atariwriter Plus, Paul Alhart  
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Two programs to convert Basic or Pascal programs into "C"  
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PIO Controller, Bob Woolley (PSAN-August 87). A  
You-Build-It Parallel Buss Interface for XL/XE Computers.

ST Disk Directories, Unknown (CHAOS/MAM-August 87). The  
nuts and bolts explanation of ST disks and how they are set  
up.

A Parallel Buss Interface for Your 1200XL, Bob Woolley  
(SLCC Journal-October 87). A You-Build-It Parallel Buss  
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Primer on File Transfer Methods, Stu Marcellus (MACC  
Newsletter-September 87). Explanation and history of: ASCII,  
XMODEM, XMODEM CRC, YMODEM, YMODEM BATCH, & ZMODEM.

5.25 ST Floppy Disk Drive, D. Lloyd (Mile HI-September  
87). How to use a standard (IBM type) drive with an ST.  
Conversion instructions.

The Greatest Hacker of All Time, Dave Small (Current  
Notes-September 87). Nikola Tesla using the Earth as a  
resonator for his Tesla Coil.

Phasar, Bill Shepherd (DALACE-September 87). Favorable  
review of this home budgeting/accounting program.

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